



MICHIGAN ADOPTION DAY

Giving thanks for families

Tuesday, November 25, 2008

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MICHIGAN ADOPTION DAY TO BE HELD NOV. 25; COUNTRY'S LARGEST CELEBRATION OF ADOPTIVE FAMILIES NOW IN SIXTH YEAR

Tomorrow last day to view "Heart Gallery" of adoptable children at Hall of Justice

LANSING, MI, November 24, 2008 – This Thanksgiving, many Michigan families will have special reason to give thanks: the addition of new family members through adoption on Michigan's sixth annual Adoption Day.

Thirty Michigan counties are holding Adoption Day events on or about November 25, the date designated by the Michigan Supreme Court as "Michigan Adoption Day"; about 225 adoptions will be finalized. The event is co-sponsored by the Michigan Supreme Court, the Michigan Department of Human Services, the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE), and the Family Services division of the State Court Administrative Office.

Local events include finalizing adoptions and parties for adoptive families. Some counties are holding informational open houses with speakers and information about the adoption process.

Chief Justice Clifford W. Taylor noted that, while adoption finalization hearings are usually private, many participating courts are opening their adoption hearings to the public. "Michigan Adoption Day gives the public a window into the adoption process," Taylor said. "This is a celebration of adoption, but it's also very much about educating the public as to the challenges and great rewards of being an adoptive or foster parent."

DHS Director Ismael Ahmed noted that "There are about 4,125 children in the foster care system who have the goal of adoption. In 2008, DHS oversaw the adoptions of 2,700 children from the foster care system. While that number is commendable, let's do the math – we need more adoptive families. We need many 'adoption days' – not just now but throughout the year."

In addition to local court events, the Michigan Supreme Court hosted the “Heart Gallery,” a photographic exhibit of Michigan children waiting to be adopted, at the Michigan Hall of Justice from Nov. 12 – 25. The Heart Gallery is a project of MARE; the exhibit is located on the first floor of the Hall of Justice and may be viewed Monday – Friday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Admission is free.

Anyone interested in adopting a child may contact MARE at (800) 589-6273 or visit the web site at <http://www.mare.org>. For more information about adoption, go to <http://www.michigan.gov/dhs>. For a complete list of state Adoption Day events, visit <http://www.courts.michigan.gov/supremecourt/Press/MichiganAdoptionDayIndex.htm>.

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